

THE BRAHMAVÂDIN.

“एकं सत् विशाबहुधावदन्ति.”

“That which exists is One: sages call it variously.”—*Rigveda*, I, 164, 46.

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THE ĀDITYAS.

1. These words of praise dropping down clarified butter, I offer ever to the kings Ādityas by means of the organ of speech (serving as the sacrificial ladle). May Mitra, Aryaman, Bhaga, the widely manifest Varuna, Daksha, and Amsa hear us.

2. May Mitra, Aryaman, Varuna—May the Ādityas of equal wisdom who are bright, pure as falling streams of water, sinless, blameless, and uninjured, now accept this my song of praise.

3. These Ādityas, who are vast, profound, uninjured, and desirous of doing harm to enemies, and possess many eyes, behold from within the good and the evil: even all the most distant things are near to the kings.

4. The gods Ādityas who uphold that which moves as well as that which does not move, who are protectors of the whole world, possess far-seeing wisdom, guard all lives, are true to Law, and remove the debts due,—(may they be propitious).

5. May we, Ādityas, obtain this your protection which O Aryaman, when danger comes, produces happy safety. Under your guidance, Mitra and Varuna, may we give up sins like places full of pitfalls.

6. O Aryaman and Mitra and Varuna, smooth is indeed your path, thornless and excellent; thence, Ādityas, speak to us kindly and grant to us happiness which it is hard to destroy.

7. May Aditi, mother of kings, transport us beyond all hatred, may Aryaman by easy paths. May we, uninjured and surrounded by heroes, win Mitra's and Varuna's high protection.

8. They uphold the three earths and the three heavens; three are their functions in the interior of the sacrifice (of gods). Mighty through law, Ādityas, is your greatness, and it is most excellent, Aryaman, Varuna, and Mitra.

9. They who are golden and splendid and pure like falling streams of water, who neither sleep nor close their eyelids, and who are uninjured and worthy of high praise, hold aloft for the righteous mortal the three bright heavenly things.

10. O Asura Varuna, you are the king and ruler of all, of those who are gods as well as of those who are mortals. Grant into us to see a hundred years; may we attain the length of life well ordained before.

11. Neither the right nor the left do I distinguish, neither the front nor yet the rear. O Ye Adityas. O Vasus, I am ripe in knowledge and yet timidly dependent; may I, guided by you, attain the light which is without danger.

12. He who offers gifts unto the kings, the true leaders of the Law, he whom their everlasting blessings of abundance prosper, moves with the chariot first in rank and wealthy, and praised in sacrificial assemblies.

13. Pure, uninjured, possessing abundance of food, and having heroes around, he dwells beside the waters which are rich with pasture. None slays, from near at hand or from a distance him who is under the guidance of the Adityas.

14. Whatever sin we have committed against you, forgive us Aditi, Mitra, and Varuna. May I obtain, O Indra, the extensive light which is free from danger; may not prolonged darkness seize us.

15. The two united increase for him the rain from heaven to fulfil his desires; he thrives indeed full of worthy wealth; he goes to war mastering both the mansions; to him both halves of the world are gracious.

16. May I car-borne pass like a skilful horseman your wonderful powers, O ye holy ones, intended to destroy oppressors, and your snares spread out against the foe, Adityas: may we uninjured dwell in abounding happiness.

17. May I not have to proclaim, O Varuna, the destitution of my wealthy, dear, and liberal kindred. King, may I never be wanting in well-ordered riches. May we with heroes speak loud in the sacrificial assembly.

Rigveda, II, 27.

SRI RÁMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA'S TEACHINGS.

1. Milk and water when brought into contact surely mix; and the milk can never be kept unmixed. Similarly if the neophyte, thirsting after self-improvement, mixes indiscriminately with all sorts of worldly men, not only does he lose his ideal, but also his former faith, love and enthusiasm also die away imperceptibly.

2. Is it good to create sects? (Here is a pun on the word '*Dal*' which means both a 'sect' or 'party' as well as "the rank growth on the surface of a stagnant pool") The '*Dal*' cannot grow in a current of water: it grows only in the stagnant waters of petty pools. He whose heart earnestly longs after the Deity has no time for anything else. He who looks for fame and honor, forms sects (*Dal*).

3. The *Vedas*, *Tantras*, and the *Purānas* and all the sacred scriptures of the world have become as if defiled (as food thrown out of the mouth becomes polluted): because they have been constantly repeated by and have come out of, human mouths. But the *Brahman* or the Absolute has never been defiled, for no one as yet has been able to express Him by human speech.

4. The parable of a Brahmin and his low-caste servant.

As soon as *Mâyā* is found out, she flies away. A priest was once going to the village of his disciple. He had no servant with him. On the way, seeing a cobbler, he addressed him saying "Halloo! good man, wilt thou accompany me as a servant? Thou

shalt dine well and wilt be well cared for, come along." The cobbler replied "Reverend Sir, I am of the lowest caste, how can I represent your servant?" The priest said, "Never mind that. Do not tell anybody what thou art, nor speak to or make acquaintance with any one." The cobbler agreed. At twilight while the priest was sitting at prayers in the house of his disciple another Brahman came and addressed the priest's servant "Fellow, go and bring my shoes from there." The servant true to the words of his master made no response. The Brahmin repeated the order a second time but the servant remained silent. The Brahmin repeated it again and again, but the cobbler moved not an inch. At last getting annoyed the Brahmin angrily said "Halloo Sirrah! How darest thou not obey a Brahmin's command! What is thy caste? Art thou a cobbler?" The cobbler hearing this began to tremble with fear and piteously looking at the priest said "O venerable sir, O venerable sir! I am found out. I can not stay here any longer, let me flee." So saying he took to his heels.

5. It is true that God is even in the tiger, but we must not go and face the animal. So it is true God dwells even in the most wicked, but it is not meet that we should associate with the wicked.

6. What is the relation between *Jivātman* and *Paramātman*?

As when a plank of wood is stretched across a current of water, the water seems to be divided into two, so the indivisible appears divided into two by limitations (*Upādhi*) of *Mâyā*. In fact they are one and the same.

The Brahnavadin

SATURDAY, 9TH NOVEMBER 1895.

RELIGION AND RITUAL.

If the origin of religions is lost in the mists of hoary antiquity, the origin of rituals is equally old and equally unintelligible to us of modern times. It is held by students of Comparative Religion that there can be no religion without rituals, and indeed the history of the long progress of man in civilisation and self-enlightenment nowhere gives us even a single instance of a religion without rituals. If religion arose, as it is believed, out of the psychological necessities of human nature, rituals must have surely come into existence to satisfy the practical social needs of early communities in regard to religious matters. All religions have a metaphysical side represented by doctrine, and a practical side represented by ritual. A mere belief in the existence of the Divine, however rationally arrived at, cannot constitute religion, which implies also the establishment, by means of suitable acts, of a satisfactory relationship between the worshipper and the worshipped. This practical aspect of religion, Carlyle mentions in his *Sartor Resartus* as "Church-Clothes," by which term he warns us not to understand Cassocks and Surplices and Sunday-clothes. "Church-Clothes are, in our vocabulary," he says, "the Forms, the *Vestures*, under which men have at various periods embodied and represented for themselves the Religious Principle; that is to say, invested the Divine Idea of the World with a sensible and practically active Body, so that it might dwell among them as a living and life-giving Word."

The Divine Idea of the World has been thus more or less satisfactorily symbolised by the ritual in all religions. But the relative importance of doctrine and ritual may be seen to be different in different religions, although belief and practice have to go hand in hand in all of them. Without the idea to be symbolised no symbols can of course come into existence. Therefore doctrine must precede ritual. Nevertheless, if we study the primitive forms of religion, we do not find in them

any definite formulation of doctrine so much as the scrupulous observance of certain practices. Why rituals are so important in primitive religions it is not quite easy fully to explain. In all probability it is due to the weakness of primitive man's power of abstract thinking, which weakness makes myths and material symbols the necessary implements of his thought. In priest-ridden religions, which are of a later stage of development, rituals become more and more complicated and acquire much mystic significance. All kinds of secular knowledge, even such as that of bridge-building and of the problem of squaring the circle, get intimately associated with the religious office of the priest, and rituals become very often the symbolic representations of the law and order of nature viewed as divine. Primitive rituals are purely the embodiments of primitive man's religious needs and aspirations as well as of his religious hopes and fears. Therefore they are simple and equally intelligible to all concerned. But priestly rituals contain, in a kind of cipher language, the key to much of the priest's philosophy and science, and officiating in the performance of such rituals becomes his fitting and natural occupation. His love for his usually lucrative office largely accounts for the predominance and tenacity of rituals in many comparatively higher forms of religion. It has, however, to be said that human thought advances more rapidly in the direction of freedom and progress than human institutions, and rituals as institutions have of themselves a tendency to linger on even when the doctrines which gave rise to them have changed.

Soon enough the internal pressure of changed doctrines leads to a disruption and re-adjustment of the old rituals. Sometimes they are retained even under the new order of things, but only with a new meaning attributed to them. In the comparatively earlier forms of religion very little importance is attached to the individual. Religion is, in such circumstances, an affair in which the community as a whole is interested. By and by it becomes mainly an affair between the individual and his God. In this latter condition righteousness comes naturally to be looked upon as a better means of establishing communion between man and God than all elaborate systems of rituals. In some priestly or hieratic religions we have rituals intended for the religious culture of the individual also, but they soon lose their meaning with the masses and are either ignored or treated

with indifference. Every now and then true religion thus withdraws itself from old and accustomed forms of symbolic representation, because each advance in the conception of the religious ideal necessitates the repair and the re-organisation of rituals. Without such repair and reorganisation of rituals the religious ideal itself is apt to lose its hold on the minds of men. Even the worthiest man when dressed in rags runs the risk of being slighted and forgotten. The externalities of a religion are no doubt unessential when it becomes highly developed, but they are too important to be at any time neglected or altogether set aside. However the chief thing always is to see the slowly changing externalities of religion harmonising from time to time with its inner essence.

An enlightened follower of a highly abstract and truly universal religion may say with the poet,

I can but lift the torch
Of Reason in the dusky cave of Life,
And gaze on this great miracle, the World,
Adoring That who made, and makes, and is,
And is not what I gaze on—all else Form,
Ritual, varying with the tribes of men.

But even to him these forms and rituals are needful. They give him the requisite discipline and strength and consolation in life, and fill his heart with hope and confidence. Although it is true that all "outward religion originates by society," and that "society becomes possible by religion," even the essentially inward religion of the free, enlightened, and aspiring soul finds rituals and forms helpful in making weak humanity

Here on this bank 'n some way live the life
Beyond the bridge, and serve that Infinite
Within us, as without, that All-in-all,
And Over all, the never changing One
And ever-changing Many, in praise of Whom
The Christian bell, the cry from off the mosque,
And vaguer voices of Polytheism
Make but one music, harmonising "Pray."

These general remarks regarding the relation of ritual to religion are fully borne out by the history of the progress of religion in India. Our earliest religious records give us an abundant stream of earnest prayers welling out from the heart of the pious worshippers of old, and moving on to be received into the profound, ever-active and ever-new infinite ocean of the Divine. These prayers are generally simple requests for health, wealth, strength, and purity, for success in the battlefield and for prosperity in home-life and all its relations. They are addressed to deities looked upon as kind friends and benefactors. Husband and wife together prayed and deposited the simple sacrificial offering in the sacred fire calling upon the gods to be near them and be seated on the *kusa* grass spread for the purpose. The head of every family worshipped thus from day to day, and heads of tribes, clans, and other such communities also offered similar sacrifices on behalf of the communities they represented. The Vedic Gods seem to have been considered by their worshippers as the originators of motion, life, and thought; and in them they saw the embodiments of truth, law,

and immortality. The sacrifice and the distribution of the remainder of the sacrificial offering among the worshippers were intended to strengthen the bond between these and their gods, who, it was understood, were thereby induced to help in every way the suppliant and dependent man. For this simple form of worship symbolising this simple doctrine there was no need of a specialist priest; and the prayers were all then the out-pourings of feeling hearts. Gradually the efficacy of the older prayers began to be valued highly, and time itself naturally lent a new lustre to the sacredness of the old ritualistic symbols. Thus the priest came into existence, and, being a specialist for whom religion had become a means of livelihood, he made the liturgy more and more complex and unintelligible to the uninitiated, so that without his help no public worship could go on.

It appears probable that it was under such circumstances that *Brahmins* and *Brahmanism* arose in India. And very rightly does the historian say, "The Brahmins still represent the early Aryan civilisation of India. Indeed the essential history of India is a narrative of the extension of their civilisation throughout India." Brahmanism, as originally designed, was a grand religious organisation deeply influencing the society and the politics of the country, and giving the Brahmin himself the first rank in society. By this organisation the life of the Aryan man was parcelled out into four periods, and the every-day duties of each of these periods were laid down with a marvellous fullness of details in authoritative law-books, so that nothing could be done by any Aryan man of any rank or of any age without religion being in some way connected with it. Further, the theoretical classification of society into four divisions obtained formal recognition. The whole of life became a round of religious duties, and there naturally came into existence innumerable restrictions affecting the personal and social conduct of individuals. In this organisation the individual counted almost for nothing; and the interest of the community was always the prevailing consideration. It must be said to the credit of the Brahmin caste that its leaders have all along recognised the incompatibility of spiritual supremacy with earthly pomp. Brahmanism made the life of the Brahmin a severer course of discipline than that of any man of any other caste. It was a high ideal of self-culture and self-restraint that the Brahmin placed before himself. "Throughout his whole life he practised a strict temperance; drinking no wine, using a simple diet, curbing the desires, shut off from the tumults of war, and his thoughts fixed on study and contemplation." Nevertheless, even the Brahmin inevitably became worldly, as wealth and power have both the tendency to gravitate towards centres of thought, culture and enlightenment. The worldliness of the Brahmins as well as the growing self-consciousness of the other communities led to the rebellion against the formal and artificial life of

restraint and servitude imposed by Brahmanism on all. The Kshatriya had to live and labour in the very midst of the crowding realities of life, and he it was that first saw the unsuitableness of the old order to the altered condition of things. The Brahmins also were able to rise to the occasion somewhat later on, and realise that man's life was certainly meant to be more than a mere round of authoritatively imposed rituals, and that religion is after all something in which the aspiring hearts of individuals must have freedom and facility to ascend to the highest regions of religious light and bliss. In this connection our readers may well peruse the IV Chapter of the *Bhagavadgîtâ*.

Thus arose the Vedânta in India. There is no doubt that the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgîtâ emphatically declare against ritualism, although the later Brahmin Commentators of these works shew a decided partiality in its favour. Whether the new Vedântic dispensation altogether abrogates the old Brahmanical one or not, is a question on which there has been much difference of opinion, which difference has given rise in modern times to sectarian divisions among Brahmins. The general tendency of modern Brahmanical Vedântic thought has been more or less towards the preservation of the new wine in the old bottle, and the universal spirit of toleration found in the Vedânta seems to lend support even to the awkward performance of this impossible feat. The Vedic ideas of truth, law, and immortality get very properly identified with one another in the grand conception of the One who is all in all and over all ; and the mysteries of motion, life, and thought find their final solution in the *Brahman* of the Vedânta. It is seen to be no longer possible for religion to be, in its essence, different for different persons, and to accentuate the artificial distinctions between man and man ; for it has been made out that all life and all thought is from Him who is one only without a second. To the Vedântin the realisation of the divineness of human nature is the only end for which all desirable forms of outward practical worship may be allowed to exist ; rituals and forms of worship have in themselves no value for him, they are only the means to an end. If the heart can be ripened so as to be full of divine sweetness without the help of rituals, they may be altogether done away with. If not, let each man freely choose for himself the forms of worship that are most suited to his own religious advancement. The question of ritualistic conformity in religious matters is wholly outside the purview of the Vedânta. It does not go to war against nonconformity, heterodoxy and heresy. For the attainment of the sublime self-realisation of the Vedânta man has mainly to depend upon self-discipline and the surrender of one's own self to God ; and Mrs. Besant's brief but admirable summary of the "central lesson of the Bhagavadgîtâ" given in the preface to her translation of

that work brings this out most beautifully. What she says of the Bhagavadgîtâ is indeed true of the whole Vedânta :—

"It is a scripture of Yoga : now Yoga is literally Union, and it means harmony with the Divine Law, the becoming one with the Divine Life, by the subdual of all outward-going energies. To reach this, balance must be gained, equilibrium, so that the self, joined to the Self, shall not be affected by pleasure or pain, desire or aversion, or any of the "pairs of opposites" between which untrained selves swing backwards and forwards. Moderation is therefore the key-note of the Gîtâ and the harmonising of all the constituents of man, till they vibrate in perfect attunement with the One, the Supreme Self. This is the aim the disciple is to set before him. He must learn not to be attracted by the attractive, nor repelled by the repellent, but must see both as manifestations of the one Lord, so that they may be lessons for his guidance not fetters for his bondage. In the midst of turmoil he must rest in the Lord of Peace, discharging every duty to the fullest, not because he seeks the results of his actions, but because it is his duty to perform them. His heart is an altar, love to his Lord the flame burning upon it ; all his acts, physical and mental, are sacrifices offered on the altar ; and once offered, he has with them no further concern. They ascend to the Lotus Feet of Îśvara, and, changed by the fire, they retain no binding force on the soul."

Translation.

VEDARTHA SANGRAHA,

A DISCOURSE ON THE TEACHINGS OF
THE UPANISHADS.

BY SRI RAMANUJA.

(Continued from page 32.)

It may then be said thus :—Having, even in the beginning (of the passages under reference), postulated the reality of the cause alone, by means of the statement that the knowledge of the one is the knowledge of all ; and having, by means of the example of clay, explained the reality of that alone which is the cause and the unreality of that which is the modified effect ; the undifferentiated (or attributeless) condition of the *Brahman* forming the only reality is declared by the passage, 'Dear child, all this was only *Sat* in the beginning, one only without a second,' which does away with all individual and specific differences. Even the passages in other contexts intended to examine this, *i.e.*, such as say "The *Brahman* is truth, knowledge, and is infinite," that it is "faultless" "attributecless," is "intelligence" and "bliss," &c., teach us that it is of the nature of an absolute unity opposed to the possession of all attributes. It cannot be said that, even in regard to the teaching of this absolute

oneness of nature, the words (quoted above) are used without any definite significance; for, although the thing is one, for the purpose of establishing that it is in nature different from (or opposed to) all, the words are all full of meaning.

This is not so. In the case (of the supposition) of the unreality of all, owing to the (consequent) non-existence of all that is to be known, the proposition, that, through the knowledge of the one, the knowledge of all is attained, cannot hold good. Or, it would appear to be just possible for reality and unreality to become one. But then in the case (of the supposition) of the reality of all as ensouled by, or comprehended in, That (the *Brahman*), the knowledge of all logically results from the knowledge of the one. This is the meaning:—(the father) says addressing Svetaketu, "You are unmoved; did you enquire about that *ādeśa*?"—that is—you appear as though you are fully satisfied, did you ask of those teachers about that *ādeśa*? That by which direction, rule, or command is implied is an *ādeśa*. *Ādeśa* is commandment, because it agrees in meaning with "O Gārgi, in obedience to the command of Him who is indestructible the sun and the moon stand supported," and other similar passages. Similarly we have the saying of Manu, "Him who is the ruler of all," and so on. Even here, after pointing out, by the statement "One only," that it (*Brahman*) is the material cause of the universe, its own nature as the inherent governing principle is also brought out, because by the word "secondless" every other governing principle is negated. Therefore what has been said (by the father) may come to this:—"Have you enquired about that Ruler who also forms the material cause of the universe, by hearing, conceiving, and knowing whom, the unheard, the unconceived, and the unknown becomes (the same as) the heard, the conceived, and the known?"

THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL IN MAN.

By N. RAMANUJA CHARYA, B.A.

One of the most difficult problems of metaphysical science which press upon us for solution whenever our thoughts are turned away from the material concerns of life, and directed inwards, is that of the existence of what is called soul in man. The last word of modern philosophy on the subject seems to be that its existence is not capable of any satisfactory scientific demonstration, and that the question, therefore, should be relegated to the realm of the unknowable and the insoluble. This conclusion of the scientific philosophy of the West, added to the materialistic tendencies of the age, has been the sole cause of the prevalent disease of *soul-blindness*, and its many attendant evils. This disease has wholly transformed the nature of man. It has changed the purpose of his actions and thoughts, the aim of his life and its best ideals. It

has introduced the dangerous principle of unlimited competition for pleasure and pelf in society, in place of self-sacrifice, brotherly feeling, charity and co-operation. It has made money-making the sole end and aim of life, and competition, fair or foul, the means to attain it. In short it is soul-blindness that has given rise to the individualistic egoism of modern civilisation.

That this mode of life is productive of endless evils, and subversive of the order and stability of society, is amply proved by the present condition of civilized humanity. Never was poverty so great a curse and sin as it is now. Never was there a society in which millions of half naked and half starved paupers abounded and a few millionaires cunningly hoarded up immense wealth. At no period in the history of the human race, have we had so much friction among the several classes of society, so much envy, so great a selfishness and greed, and so thorough a blindness to the true interest of the individual or the nation, as in our own. Life now is all excitement and struggle. The so-called winners in the game of life after all their weary search after the pleasures of this world, at the expense of their brethren, find themselves face to face with the inevitable last destiny that awaits all. They, then, find in themselves no peace of mind, and no hopes. Their lives have been no preparations to meet death. They fear the terrible doom. They do not know what it is or what it leads to. Their mental agonies are most horrible and excruciating. The thought of separation from friends, wife and children, and from what has been all along dearly cherished, makes death and its feared consequences still more terrible. Such is a typical picture of the last moments of an average modern man.

What a contrast this is to the state of tranquility and perfect peace in the mind of an ancient Brahman or even a modern *sanyāsin*, in his hour of death! The life of the ancient Brahman, was throughout a preparation for that "inevitable hour" and for the life beyond. He was trying all through life to lessen his attachments to things of this world. He knew that life on earth was full of miseries, and the pleasures it could afford were all only ephemeral. He fully realized that he was not the body, but a spirit eternal and divine. His philosophy taught him how to get, at least, a partial glimpse, while living here, of that blissful life beyond. It also taught him how best to meet death with a cheerful face, and without feeling any pangs of heart. He worked for the world, not to increase so much the store of human pleasures as for the joint welfare of his own soul and that of others. But he did not underrate the importance of the body. He used it as an instrument for the attainment of his higher spiritual end. He never set any value on luxuries which modern men have so absurdly, in their soul-blindness, raised to the rank of the necessities of life. What is the reason of this wide diversity between the ancient life and the modern? And what is the reason of there being now two directly antagonistic ideals for man to follow? The reason is not far to seek. It lies in the fact that the ancient Brahman knew well that he had a soul, while

the modern man considers himself soulless. The former elevated man to the dignity of a god, and the latter degrades him into the level of a brute. If the question whether man has soul, is put to a modern man of science, he invariably answers—"No. There is no scientific evidence to prove that. We have dissected the human frame and examined most minutely, and with the greatest care, all its component parts; and we have not been able to discover a soul, even with the aid of our best microscopes magnifying hundreds of diameters. Moreover, why should we assume the existence of an unknown thing as the soul? We can very easily explain all the complex phenomena of the mind, with brain cells and their vibrations, and the laws of association and co-ordination." This is the position of the extremists among our present-day scientists, while the more moderate among them are seen to be contented with the reply, "we do not know, it is a mystery, an insoluble mystery."

Such a denial of soul in man, in the words of Masson, is "a needless audacity of the human mind; a braggartism of negation, where negation is intrinsically absurd, and silence would answer all practical purposes." If any man is unable to see a soul in the body, it is no wonder. It cannot be seen; for, it is invisible. It cannot be known; for, it is the knower. How can the knower be known with a vision directed to things external? How can the soul be known as an object of consciousness, while it is the knowing subject, unless the trained power of cognition is directed inwards to it? How can soul be measured in terms of matter? It is impossible. Our faculty of external vision cannot cognise it.

The faculty of *introvision* must be cultivated for that purpose. So long as this is not developed, there can be no conclusive evidence to prove the existence of the soul or its nature. This faculty our ancients called, *Yoga drishti* or *divya chakshus*—the divine sight, which alone can give us a real knowledge of God, of soul and of the universe. Even for those who have not developed this faculty, evidence is not wanting to shew the existence of soul. It is all summed up in the following verse from the *Atmasiddhi* of the sage Yāmanacharya the worthy preceptor of Śrī Rāmanuja and one of the greatest Vedāntins of Southern India:

एवमात्मा स्वतस्सिद्ध्यन्तागेमनानुमानतः ।
योगाभ्यासभवास्पष्टं प्रत्यक्षेण प्रकाश्यते ॥

"The existence of *Atman* or soul is self-evident. It can be proved also by inference and the scripture; but is directly perceived only by him who has practiced the exercises of *Yoga*." The direct perception is attained only when the internal vision is developed after a long practice of *Yoga*. It is only exercise that strengthens a faculty, and it is no wonder therefore that this faculty, atrophied in almost all of us, can be brought into play only after a life-long practice in the field of *Yoga*. But have we not, for all practical purposes, the other evidences mentioned in the foregoing verse to prove to us the existence

of soul? Leaving out scripture, which some modern minds may not be disposed to accept as an evidence, let us examine the other two.

The self-evident nature of the existence of the soul is seen from the following facts. No man can deny his own existence; and every one feels himself to be something which he calls "I," to which he refers all his sensations, thoughts, and emotions, and but for which they would all be absolutely meaningless to him. Let a man examine his own mind and see if he does not feel himself to be different from the body which itself is felt to be external. The "I" is unfolded in every act of consciousness and is felt to be an unchanging and unchangeable something in the midst of feelings, volitions and thoughts which are always changing. It is not felt to be of the nature of matter, nor is it felt to be of the nature of thought or feeling or volition. It is evidently incapable of any psychological analysis. It is the *psyche* pure and simple, the *pramāṇī* of Sanskrit philosophy standing above the reach of all instruments of evidence. It is the highest reality that makes every state of consciousness what it is, and without which all else must become non-existence. If this is no reality, what, then, is reality for us? If it be supposed that the "I," divested of all the accidental associations of name and form, is an illusion, what is it that supposes it to be an illusion? What is it that feels this surmise to be correct? The answer must be this "I" again, this ever-recurring something, which will never disappear so long as thought exists.

Let us, then, examine by the method of inference, to what mysterious principle this word "I" refers. It cannot be to the body; for in spite of the changes in the body, the loss of limbs, &c., it persists changeless, and seems indivisible. It neither decreases nor increases however much the body may change, or however much the contents of one's knowledge may increase or decrease. We have remembrances of the past, experiences of the present and expectations of the future. But the "I" is the same indivisible something, somehow related to all these, but persisting through all times unchanged.

Even in sleep, we have reasons to conclude that self-consciousness continues, but only deprived of the associations of name and form. That sleep causes no break in the chain of self-consciousness can be inferred from our memory in the waking state which comes to us in the form, "I slept well last night." How can this piece of memory exist, or how can there be memory at all if sleep were not an experience of the knower but a cessation of self? What else is there that can bridge this chasm if sleep be supposed to be a cessation of self-consciousness? Such reasoning proves almost conclusively the existence of soul which is unchanging and unanalysable. Hence the ancients called it a spiritual atom or monad (*anu*). If this be granted, then its eternity is also proved. Death can mean only a change in the composition of a body. Who can conceive the death or annihilation of that something which has been proved to be

unanalysable or *atomic*? Can our scientists conceive the change or annihilation of a chemical atom granting at the same time, that it is an ultimate particle incapable of analysis into anything simpler? Hence the soul being a monad of consciousness unanalysable and atomic, the very thought of its destruction is inconceivable and self-contradictory.

These, among others, are the reasons that our ancient *Rishis* adduce to prove the existence of a permanent soul in man. However, for those who are willing to follow their *yoga* methods and practices, they offer more direct and conclusive evidence to demonstrate the existence of the soul and its capabilities. These things are condemned unheard in our age.

The present generation, in its intellectual vanity and mad rush into the whirlpool of pleasure is only too ready to pooch-pooch everything ancient which does not dovetail with its own preposterous theories and dogmas of life and its purposes. "To the eye of vulgar logic what is man? An omnivorous biped that wears breeches. To the eye of pure reason, what is he? A soul, a spirit, a divine apparition."—Such is Carlyle's conclusion on the subject.

Correspondence.

MAN HIS LITTLENESS AND HIS GREATNESS.

Familiarity, it has been said, is our worst enemy. There are ever so many things in this world, which, because we see them daily, we have ceased to be curious about. 'How few of us look at the sky' Ruskin asks. Indeed very few really see it, for it has been our companion from the earliest moments of our lives, and has by its assuring constancy lulled to rest the spirit of questioning. The child stares with surprise at a stranger, but never so at its own mother. To Miranda the desert-bred maiden, Fernandez though quite as much as man as her own father is full of curiosity and interest. For the same reason, we look more wistfully at a new spinning-wheel than at the sky with all its serried phalanx of stars. If however the same sky with its gilded heraldry had not been when we were born and were to surprise us with a sudden arrival, our wonder and curiosity would reach a poetic height, and the lowest of the little men of earth would lift up his hands with awe and reverence and pour forth in the simplicity and fulness of his fear a hymn of praise with almost Vedic vigor. But now look at our dulness. The sky is hourly, minutely phenomenal. No two moments of its life are alike: clouds pass and repass: the sun rises and sets with epic pomp, the moon shines out with lyric sweetness: there is a ceaseless rising and falling of the curtains above, and the scenes there, are being endlessly shifted: but the

majority of us are perfectly dull to such charms, though we know absolutely nothing about them.

But why talk of the sky: we are hardly concerned with it: how far it is going to meddle with our day's work, the meteorological chart shows us and that is quite enough for all our practical purposes: let us go to things nearer home: let us take man himself the one object in creation with which we are most closely concerned. Very few men can rid themselves of human associations: in work and out of work, we are always with men. 'Society, love and friendship' is the silent cry even of our spare moments. But what do we know of man? Nothing. He comes and goes, we do not know where. One man is a poet and another a warrior we hardly know why. Man breathes while he lives, but at the moment of death breath fails: no human physiology can tell us satisfactorily enough what it is that lies breathless, and what that which was breathing, why we came, and where we go, if the life we lived ends with death, and whether we are matter, or spirit, or soul, or mind, or the senses, or everything or nothing. The great and profound mystery that encircles us all around baffles our feeble attempt to unravel it and it was in the fulness of this sense of the darkness around that Goethe cried out 'we are eternally in contact with problems. Man is an obscure being: he knows little of the world and of himself least of all.' In the same way Rousseau has said 'we have no measure for this huge machine—the world. We cannot calculate its relations; we know neither its primary laws nor its final causes. We do not know ourselves: we know neither our nature nor our active principle. These are great sayings—the sayings of men who have at least shaken off the dulness of familiarity. To feel the mystery, to understand the problem, to recognise the feebleness of our understanding is itself a privilege in the world, where man too often falls a victim to the sense of familiarity, and being hardly able to raise himself above his little concerns that rise in successive surprise resembles the fisherman swimmer on the sea who, while battling with its wavelet for the sake of prey, feels not the majesty of its voice or the glory of its storms.

We of to-day are however the heirs of ages and great men—godlike men have been before us; and in the light of the visions they have had, and the truths they have bequeathed to the world, we shall proceed to chalk out however vaguely the range of the curious self-reflecting animal called 'man'

इन्द्रियाणिपराण्याहु रिन्द्रियेभ्यः परमनः।

मनसस्तुपराबुद्धि योबुद्धेः परतस्तुतः ॥

i.e., the senses are higher than the body, the mind is higher than the senses, the intellect is higher than the mind; the soul or the *Atman* is higher than all these.

Man has been called 'the roof of creation; but he can hardly be so called if we take his body alone into accounts. Though he is 'express and admirable,' as Shakespeare puts it, in form and moving, animals there are which are stronger more

beautiful, more majestic and better than he is in the qualities of the body. Huxley considers the horse the best built animal in creation. There is a majesty about the tusked Indian Elephant to which the best gladiator can lay no claim. The bearing of a lion is more royal than that of a born king. The gait of a well-bred bull of the south would shame that of a warrior. The peacock's spreading its feathers is a splendid festival. Not even Nurjehan had the soft complexion of a parrot. The skylark the 'pilgrim of the sky' is much more privileged than man chained down to earth. The cobra that spreads its hood at the sound of sweet music is almost divine, while the Garuda bird that hymns across the sky is certainly so. Man, then, is not more favored than other animals in creation in point of physique, and is indeed a more dirty animal than many a wild beast. Schopenhauer considers the faces of most men common place. Pattanathu Pillayar, the great Dravidian philosopher says 'I have survived the shafts of woman's eyes. My Lord has made me one with Him. So whether I live or die it matters not, my happiness is all the same. Still it is disgusting to bear company with this body.' The pride of man is not therefore his body. The dignity he has and the majesty of his 'heaven erect' face are primarily due to the grandeur of the spirit that beams forth from within.

Passing on from the body of man to his senses and mind, there too we find he has little reason for pride. So far as the activity of the senses is concerned he is almost inferior to animals. Schopenhauer goes to the length of putting him down as decidedly lower than most animals. There are men that make the tiger and the bear good and virtuous. The tiger and the bear have enemies marked out instinctively. The tiger does not interfere with the crow, the bear kills not cats. Man on the other hand has no such discrimination with respect to his quarrels. 'All sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas—all are his possible enemies. From the innocent ant upwards to man himself there is not one animal which he hesitates to injure for his purposes. In the storm of the senses the most sacred of social relations are set at naught. One word *dâyāda* meaning a cognate has become a synonym for a foe. Schopenhauer says 'Do we desire to know what men morally considered are worth as a whole and in general? We have only to consider their fate as a whole. That is want, wretchedness, affliction, misery and death. If men were not as a whole worthless, their fate would not be so sad.' And then when we take the question of criminal responsibility into account, when we remember that man has few instincts of enmity to obey and has a will free to use and abuse, we hardly know where to place him in the list of living animals. The ant and the spider have taught many a man. The parliament of the bees would shame the assembly at the Westminster Hall. The gentleness of the cow is proverbial. Serpents with their ear for music and their taste

for flowers and smells would shame a poet. Man's boundless selfishness, his vanity his cruelty his arrogance and wantonness are purely devilish and Hamlet might well ask 'who would bear the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely the pangs of despised love, the laws' delay, the insolence of office and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes? Indeed a great French writer has remarked that he is not worth living who has not in the midst of men even once seriously thought of suicide 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind, thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude' has in it a philosophy that must be appreciated. Pascal said that half the evils of the world would vanish if only people will learn to be quiet, but that man cannot; and as the Githa says he is doing Karma and sowing the seeds of sinful life every moment of his existence. The rage of the lion, the rancour of the elephant, the ferocity of the tiger, the venom of the serpent, the low cunning of the fox, the ugly instincts of the boar, the villainess of the rat have all their counterpart in the mind of man. Nay, he often overdoes these so-called lower animals and is wearing a constant and everthickening web of hatred and desire as naturally as a spider weaves its cobweb.

Now passing on to man's intellect, we observe he leaves many animals far behind. Indeed the intellect is a saving element in him. Newton losing himself in his mathematical calculations leaves the earth far behind. Archimedes running naked from the river with a grand discovery in his head is a demigod in human form. Galileo 'the Tuscan artist viewing the moon through optic glass' from the top of Fesole is a veritable mountain spirit. But alas how few are our heroes, how few when compared with the vast and never ending wilderness of men. Every man has intellect but mixed up with his senses it is no more a sanctuary to shelter him, but a whirlwind to toss him to and fro on the already stormy sea of this sensuous world. Intellect, the precious gift of man is in most cases prostituted and in professions like that of the lawyer and the merchant proves often a curse to the society and to the individual. It may be that it is given to us to fill the heavens with commerce, 'to rift the hills, roll the waters, flash the lightnings, and weigh the sun.' As Raman says, the world has a destination and to its end it goes with a sure instinct. So forward, forward let us, range that the great world may spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change, and as we go let us sing a triumphant anthem to the deity of knowledge—the goddess Saraswati.

But in the highest height of knowledge where are we? What we once knew to be water we now know to be oxygen plus hydrogen, but what is hydrogen and what oxygen—who can tell? What we once knew to be an element we now know to be a compound but what further can we say? In biology, in geology, in physiology, in astronomy, in physics, in chemistry, and in fact in every one of the various branches of human knowledge, there is an imperial edict 'Thus far shalt Thou and no further' thundered forth in solemn majesty and as we go

farther and farther the mystery thickens instead of dissolving, so that at last after an untiring earnest and almost frantic pursuit after the phantom of knowledge, the verdict has come forth from the lips of no less an apostle than Kant that ontology is unknowable. It is however an old conclusion given out in all humility by Socrates in Europe and Sankara in India. Newton's metaphor that he was but playing on the shore of the roaring sea of knowledge was no mock humility. I take a drop of water, I call it water and cast it away. Turner takes it and draws it on a piece of paper. Tyndall takes it, weighs it, examines it by the microscope, and wonder of wonders—innumerable creatures are found living in it all full of life, full of consciousness, and full of activity and carrying out their mission on earth with as much earnestness and freedom as man. Poor Tyndall is struck dumb with awe and wonder, lets fall the little drop and swoons away in meditation. As for knowing that drop of water, neither, you, nor I, nor Turner, nor Tyndall can do it, it is impossible and absolutely so—a melancholy conclusion no doubt but inevitable.

In point of intellect then, though we are far superior to other animals, with the ever ringing 'I know nothing' we have no special reason to be proud—much less to glorify ourselves as the lords of creation. We hardly know what beings beside ourselves live, what powers they have, what worlds hang out on space. We do not know the air we breathe, the earth we stand on, the stars that shine above—'those innumerable pitiless, passionless eyes in the heavens which burn and brand his nothingness into man.' But we know that the universe is boundless, that there are millions and millions of worlds like ours, that the whole creation is unutterably grand, and that we ourselves with the littleness of our body, the lowness of our senses, with the feebleness of our understanding and with our wickedness, vanity, and ignorance are unspeakably insignificant. We are atoms, poor insignificant atoms in this mighty, measureless and glorious universe. In the old superstition man was the centre of the world but

'He is now but a cloud and a smoke who once was a pillar of fire
The guess of a worm in the dark and the shadow of its desire.'

There is one faculty however in man which goes a little way in making up for this extreme littleness. It is the faculty of imagination: it is a magic possession as precious as the fabled jewel at the head of a toad. It is a priceless faculty with which we can measure the universe. Of it the poet has said

Whatever God did say
Is all thy plain and smooth uninterrupted way:
Nay even beyond his works thy voyages are known.'

Poetry, I mean the highest imaginative poetry, like that of Shelley and Wordsworth is its most fragrant flower. True, we cannot understand the universe but we can enjoy it. As Wordsworth so beautifully puts it 'the poet is content to enjoy the things which others might (or might not) under-

stand.' Shelley really measures the sky when he sings,

'Palace-roof of cloudless nights,
Paradise of golden lights!
Deep, immeasurable vast
Which art now and which wert then'
.....
Presence chamber, temple, home
.....
Even thy name is as a good,
.....
Generations as they pass
Worship thee with bended knees.'

Nay not content with this he is able to go farther and say

'What is heaven? a globe of dew, &c.,

Here is poetry of the most splendid kind a tacit but rapturous recognition of the power of the human mind, which tramples under foot the low cares of life, and roars aloft like the sky-lark into the domain of boundless space becoming for that time that boundless space itself. No fetters can here bind the man, nothing can check his heavenward flight, and no one here at least can say 'Thus far shalt thou.' Sing forth O spirit till your dirty bonds break asunder, for thou art on the road to salvation, very near the radiant throne of the Almighty who rejoices in thy flight and welcomes thee with open arms. Here man is grand nay boundlessly so.

Even this is not the height of man's glory, for poetry, gives both pleasure and pain: it has to record both the greatness of the universe and the littleness of man. Then again it cannot fall in love with the sultry day, the dirty tank, the barren desert and things of that kind of which there is no lack on earth. At the best therefore poetry is but a resting place on the wayside, a *mantapa* on the road to the Temple.

A higher happiness than what poetry can give is the birthright of man. It is his prerogative to be eternally and changelessly happy, to rejoice as much at sultry weather as at a moonlit night, to regard with equal composure the wanton wickedness of men and their benevolent self-sacrifice, not merely to weep with joy at a Cumbrian sunset, and fly into space with a singing sky-lark's flight but to 'mingle in the universe and feeling what he can never express, but cannot all conceal,' become himself the sun, the setting, the splendour, the sky-lark, the singing and the sky and all the rest in the glorious universe. Man is destined to conquer the heavens, the stars, the mountains, and the rivers, along with his body, his mind, and his senses, and even in this life, to dissolve himself into boundless space, and feel all within himself the roaring sea, the high mountain, the shining stars, and the noisy cataract. In this sense, he is the Lord of the creation—its exultant and all-pervading Lord, the Parabrahman of the Vedas and at this stage he is above all anger, all meanness, and all wickedness. The rage of intellect and the storm of the senses are all over, and in the mind of the highest emancipated man, there is an eternal moony splendour, boundless beatitude that is above all expression.

Now he can sing with the author of the Maitreya Upanishad.

अहमस्मिपरश्चास्मि ब्रह्मास्मिप्रभवोऽस्यहम् ।
सर्वलोकगुरुश्चास्मि सर्वलोकोऽस्मिसोऽस्यहम् ॥

i.e., I am myself, I am others, I am *Brahman*, I am the author of creation. I am the *Guru* to the whole world and I am the whole world and I am He for he is himself the *Atman* the birthless, changeless, deathless *Atman* whom swords cannot kill, fire cannot burn, water cannot moisten and wind cannot wither. This then is the height of human glory which man, senseless man is bartering away every moment for the low pleasures of life—this his birthright which blinded by passion he sells away for 'a mess of pottage?'

Most of us do not know ourselves: we do not realise our resources: we do not think about the treasures that lie concealed within the four walls of our little frame. The Vedānta philosophy, like Manackāl Nambi in the story of Alavandar, invites us to take hold of our priceless birthright and be eternally happy. This is the grand promise of the Upanishad which, not few have found, is kept to the very letter. Having thus known the potentiality of man, the greatness to which he is heir, the psalm shall no longer be:

'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth, who hast set Thy glory above the heavens, when I consider the heavens the work of Thy fingers, etc., but

'O, man! O man! how excellent is, Thy name in all the earth, who has set Thy glory above the heavens—who art Thyself the heavens, the sun, the moon, and the stars, and the God that made them all'—Aum Tatsat

MADRAS

B. R. R.

Reviews.

The Landmarks of Ethics according to the Gītā.—This is a small pamphlet of 33 pages by Mr. Bulloram Mullick, B. A., published at Calcutta, and sold for the very moderate price of four annas only. In this pamphlet we find a summary, chapter by chapter, of the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the author gives in the beginning a short introduction of a little over a page. It appears to us that the author's summary is on the whole satisfactory, although it does not come out in many places that the true spirit of Sri Krishna's teaching has been well understood. The style in which the pamphlet is written is capable of improvement, and the name is really too grand for a work of such modest pretensions. To students who just begin the study of the *Bhagavadgītā* this pamphlet may serve as a guide of some value and we hope that the author will on a future occasion bring out a work that will really deserve the name he has made bold to give to this which is apparently his first literary venture.

Notes.

Contentment, forgiveness, self-control, abstention from unrighteously appropriating anything, obedience to the rules of purification, restraint of the organs, wisdom, knowledge of the Supreme Soul, truthfulness and wrathlessness, form the tenfold law.

Manu, VI—95.

If you are unable to subject yourself physically to penances, to undergo austerities, and to engage yourself in deep contemplation, the proper course to liberate your soul from the hard fetters of *Kāma* would be to keep the passions of your heart under control; to check your desires; to carry out your secular affairs with calmness; to devote yourself to the worship of God, and to realize in yourself the "Permanent Truth," bearing in mind the transitory nature of the objects in the Universe.

Vairagya Sataka.

We are glad that a religious conference representative of various religions and sects in India took place recently at Ajmere. The organisers of the movement deserve every commendation and we hope that this conference at Ajmere will prove the first of many more such highly useful and instructive conferences to be held in all the important centres of population in India. We are strongly of opinion that the way to social salvation also is through religion.

Conferences like these will not only tend to establish peace and good understanding between the various religious communities in India but they are sure to go a very large way towards the enlightenment of our pandits and priests who are the custodians of the country's conscience. All their defects are due neither to any inherent incapacity nor to any stubborn unwillingness to learn the truth and to do justice; but are mainly, if not wholly, the result of narrow vision and want of comprehensive views.

Because of the constant pressure of external things, with our inevitable practical interest in them, and for many other reasons, the chief of them being *moral*, it will be difficult for us to maintain ourselves in the right attitude for perceiving spiritual reality; and so helps, memorials, symbols will be needed. We shall require in this sphere, something corresponding to the staff of an absent friend or the pebble of a once-traversed but now distant shore. There are fasts and feasts, the sacraments and ordinances, the rites and ceremonies, practised, with more or less detail by every religion.

—*The Burnett Lectures for 1892 and 1893.*

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